Changes in Education System

811. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the number of suicides committed by students unable to bear pre and post examination stresses and tensions, has been increasing year after year;

(b) if so, the details of the suicides committed by the students on this account during the last five years; State-wise;

(c) whether a number of eminent educationists and expert Committees have from time to time called for change in the education system, syllabus, method of teaching, system of examination and evaluation in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to improve the entire system of education in the country in the light of experiments in the foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Such instances which get reported from time to time have come to the notice of the Government.

(b) No such data-base is maintained by the Government.

(c) and (d) It is a fact that a general concern about the need to change the educational system to reduce the stress-level has been expressed from time to time by several people, including prominent educationists. several suggestions have been made to make the system more student-friendly.

(e) It is proposed to review to the situation in depth and in consultation with all concerned.

Export of Genetic Material

812. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a national authority for regulation of the export of genetic material, and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) A proposal to enact a law on Biological Diversity is under consideration of the Government. Regulation of access to genetic material and creation of a mechanism to regulate such access form part of the proposal under consideration.

Development of Chilka Lake

813. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Orissa has sough financial assistance from Government for desilting and development of Chilka lake;

(b) if so, the assistance given by the Government for the purpose; and

(c) the steps taken to desilt and develop the lake at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government of India has provided financial assistance of Rs. 112.30 lakhs to the Government of Orissa between 1988-1991 for undertaking activities like vegetation and contour bunding, water harvesting structures, gully control, stream bank erosion control, periphery bund, habitat improvement of Nalabana, education awareness work and establishment of information/data base.

The Tenth Finance Commission has recommended an amount of Rs. 27 crores for preservation of Chilka lake under Special Problem Grant. Action plan for Chilka lake for 1996-2000 prepared by Government of Orissa has been approved by Inter-Ministerial Empowered Committee (IMEC) of Ministry of Finance. A sum of Rs. 10.46 crores has already been released to the State Government for development of Chilka lake. Works being undertaken includes improvement of water exchange, salinity cost of dredgers and dredging operation.

Foreign Owned Ships

814. SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Indian Courts cannot try cases involving foreign owned ships" appearing in the *Times of India* dated April 26, 1998;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government to the actionable observations made therein and facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the steps initiated so far to deal with the problem; and

(d) the details of action now proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.